

## Tempe testing new buses for possible use in Orbit system

**TEMPE, Ariz.** (Oct. 8, 2018) – This fall, the City of Tempe will partner with Valley Metro to test two different prototype transit buses on all Orbit routes. If successful, these buses will be candidates for replacing some of the aging light-duty Orbit fleet.

Both buses can be alternatively fueled by compressed natural gas (CNG), have a larger seating capacity and are wheelchair accessible with a low floor, allowing easy access for passengers with mobility devices. Both have a rear-engine design that is expected to improve air conditioning performance, improving passenger and operator comfort.

Tempe's Orbit bus system includes some of the highest ridership routes in the city. Due to Orbit's success, the older light-duty buses often reach passenger capacity, having to turn away riders. These older buses are also unable to operate a full day, requiring additional buses to enable mid-day refueling and several buses operate on unleaded gasoline, not clean burning fuel. They are currently scheduled to be replaced incrementally over the next three years.

During the testing phase, Tempe and Valley Metro will analyze maneuverability, operating range, mechanical performance and seek feedback from passengers, residents, bus operators and service technicians. If the testing is successful, and meets the necessary Orbit operating range of approximately 250 miles between refueling, the city can potentially reduce the Orbit fleet size by up to five vehicles while maintaining current service levels.

For more information, or to comment online Oct. 11 through Oct. 22, please visit [www.tempe.gov/Orbit](http://www.tempe.gov/Orbit).

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